

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 0402

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UY, US

SUBJ: RELATIONS WITH URUGUAY

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS

1. I HAVE BEEN MUCH CONCERNED SINCE MY RETURN TO MONTEVIDEO OVER THE SETBACK WHICH HAS BEEN DEALT OUR RELATIONS WITH URUGUAY BY OUR FAILURE TO ATTEND THE MONTEVIDEO MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOLLOWING POSTPONEMENT OF THE BA MFM. WHILE FONMINISTER BLANCO AND JORGE ALVAREZ HAVE BEEN TYPICALLY MEASURED, RESTRAINED, DIGNIFIED AND EVEN HELPFUL IN THEIR EFFORTS TO MINIMIZE THE DAMAGE, THERE REMAINS NO DOUBT THAT THEY FEEL BOTH OFFENDED AND LET DOWN BY OUR DECISION. THIS IS PARTICULARLY UNFORTUNATE SINCE BLANCO HAS BEEN MOST STATESMANLIKE IN ALL HIS ACTIONS REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW DIALOGUE AND CONSTRUCTIVE AND RESTRAINED IN REACTION TO THOSE FEATURES OF THE TRADE ACT WHICH HAVE CAUSED SO MUCH TROUBLE ELSEWHERE. WHILE OUR BELIEF THAT THE MEETING HERE MIGHT PROVE RELATIVELY POINTLESS GIVEN THE UNCERTAIN FUTURE OF THE NEW DIALOGUE AFTER POSTPONEMENT OF THE MFM IS QUITE UNDERSTANDABLE, IT IS ALSO UNDERSTANDABLE THAT WITH ALMOST ALL OTHER DELEGATIONS HAVING COME IN ANY CASE URUGUAY COULD NOT HELP BUT BE EMBARRASSED TO PRESIDE OVER A POINTLESS MEETING AND ACT AS HOSTS TO FSLEGATIONS WHOSE PURPOSE IN BEING HERE HAD EVAPORATED. THERE IS ALSO THE FACT OF URUGUAY'S VERY CAREFUL ADVANCE PREPARATION FOR THE MEETING FOR WHICH IT HAD HIGH HOPES OF SUCCESS, INCLUDING

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SENDING ALVAREZ TO WASHINGTON FOR ADVANCE COORDINATION WITH US.

URUGUAY, CLEARLY, WAS LEFT HOLDING THE BAG AND AN EMPTY ONE AT THAT.

2. I BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT QUICKLY TO DO WHAT WE CAN TO MAKE AMENDS AND TO DEMONSTRATE THAT WE DO APPRECIATE OUR GOOD RELATIONS WITH URUGUAY AND THE CONSTRUCTIVE POSTURE WHICH THIS COUNTRY HAS MAINTAINED EVEN WHEN FEELING SOME SENSE OF AFFRONT. (OUR REPORTING SHOWS THAT WHILE THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN RESTRAINED, THE PRESS HAS INDICATED THE DEPTH OF REAL FEELINGS IN ITS CRITICISM OF US.) VERY HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD, I BELIEVE, WOULD BE PROMPT RECEIPT HERE OF A LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY TO FONMINISTER BLANCO. THIS COULD BE A RESPONSE TO BLANCO'S THOUGHTFUL REPLY TO THE SECRETARY'S ROUND ROBIN LETTER, BROUGHT UP-TO-DATE WITH SOME COMMENTARY REFLECTING UNDERSTANDING OF URUGUAYAN SENSITIVITY OVER OUR NON-ATTENDANCE OF THE MEETING HERE AND, PERHAPS, SHARING SOME THOUGHTS WITH RESPECT TO THE FUTURE OF THE NEW DIALOGUE OF OUR LA RELATIONSHIPS IN GENERAL, AND WITH INDICATION OF DESIRE FOR CONTINUED CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH URUGUAY IN THIS REGARD. IF SOMETHING SPECIFIC COULD BE SAID CONFIRMING THE SECRETARY'S INTENTION TO VISIT URUGUAY THAT, OF COURSE, WOULD BE EXTREMELY BENEFICIAL. FINALLY, AS A MEANS OF STRENGTHENING VITAL SUPPORT FOR THE

MINISTER'S UNDOUBTED PERSONAL GOOD WILL TOWARD US, AND ALLEVIATING A GENERAL PROBLEM IN OUR RELATIONS HERE, I URGE THAT I BE PROMPTLY AUTHORIZED TO INFORM THE GOVERNMENT THAT THE \$8 MILLION NEEDED TO COMPLETE THE PURCHASE OF THE A-37B AIRCRAFT AND PROVIDE ADEQUATELY FOR ADDITIONAL TRI-SERVICE NEEDS IN THIS YEAR WILL BE AUTHORIZED FROM FY-75 FMS CREDIT. AS YOU KNOW, THOMAS STERN OF PM OFFERED HIS SUPPORT FOR THIS AMOUNT.

3. PROMPT, FAVORABLE ACTION ON THESE RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE HELPFUL AS I PLAN SHORTLY TO SEE THE FONMINISTER IN A NORMAL VISIT FOLLOWING MY RETURN TO THE COUNTRY. IT MOST IMPORTANT THAT I HAVE SOMETHING HELPFUL TO TAKE UP WITH HIM. PLEASE ADVISE AND I WILL TIME MY REQUEST ACCORDINGLY.
SIRACUSA

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